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PAGE 01 STATE 242435

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TO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 242435

LUSAKA FOR EASUM

FOLLOWING REPEAT LONDON 11377 ACTION DEPT INFO CAPE TOWN
DURBAN JOHANNESBURG PRETORIA NATO SEP 5TH

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 11377

CAPE FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, SF, UK

SUBJECT: UK-SOUTH AFRICAN JOINT WEAPONS TRAINING

REF: CAPE TOWN 0470

1. SUMMARY. ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT, SOME LABOR MP'S
AND THE LIBERAL CHIEF WHIP HAVE ALL STRONGLY CRITICIZED
THE BRITISH LABOR GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO AUTHORIZE ROYAL
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PAGE 02 STATE 242435

NAVY TO ENGAGE IN JOINT WEAPONS TRAINING WITH SOUTH

AFRICAN NAVY. ONE PRESS REPORT CLAIMED US AND NATO HAD IMPLICITLY REINFORCED GOVERNMENT'S POSITION BY EXPRESSING INTEREST IN MAKING GREATER USE OF SIMONSTOWN BASE FACILITIES. LABOR PARTY OPPOSITION, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN MINIMAL, AS DEMANDS FOR PARTY UNITY INTENSIFY IN CRITICAL PRE-ELECTION PERIOD. AT SAME TIME, LABOR GOVERNMENT HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS INVOLVING DEFENSE, THEY ARE WILLING TO ACT ON BASIS PERCEIVED NATIONAL INTEREST. END SUMMARY.

2. ANNOUNCEMENT THAT BRITISH ROYAL NAVY WOULD HOLD JOINT TRAINING EXERCISE WITH SOUTH AFRICAN NAVY HAS STIMULATED PROTESTS FROM VARIOUS INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS OPPOSED TO UK-SOUTH AFRICAN COLLABORATION AS LONG AS SAG MAINTAINS APARTHEID POLICY. ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT PROTESTED "IN STRONGEST TERMS," AND, ACCORDING TO THE TIMES OF SEPTEMBER 2, WERE JOINED IN CRITICIZING THE BRITISH LABOR GOVERNMENT BY THREE LABOR MP'S. CHIEF LIBERAL WHIP ALSO ISSUED PRESS STATEMENT THAT "JOINT... NAVAL EXERCISES" MADE A TRAVESTY OF GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TOWARDS SOUTH AFRICA.

3. COLIN LEGUM AND ANDREW WILSON, WRITING IN THE OBSERVER ON SEPTEMBER 1, CLAIMED THAT MINISTER OF DEFENSE, ROY MASON, HAD OVERRULED HIS NAVY MINISTER, FRANK JUDD, IN AUTHORIZING JOINT WEAPONS TRAINING. SAME ARTICLE CLAIMED THAT WHEN LABOR GOVERNMENT EARLIER THIS YEAR SUSPENDED DELIVERY OF HELICOPTERS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN NAVY, SOUTH AFRICANS WANTED TO TERMINATE SIMONSTOWN AGREEMENTS, BUT WERE PERSUADED NOT TO BY PROMISE FROM "INFLUENTIAL BRITISH POLITICAL AND MILITARY CIRCLES THAT THE JUDD POLICIES WOULD BE REVERSED. THESE PRESSURES WERE REINFORCED BY THE NATO MILITARY COMMITTEE, WHICH RECENTLY TOOK A SECRET DECISION TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS ABOUT SIMONSTOWN BEING USED AS A NATO BASE..." LEGUM AND WILSON FURTHER CLAIMED "THE AMERICANS HAVE TAKEN A STRONG LINE IN SUPPORTING NATO'S INTEREST IN ACQUIRING FACILITIES IN SIMONSTOWN. ACCORDING TO WELL-PLACED AMERICAN SOURCES, THEIR GROWING INTEREST IN INDIAN OCEAN STRATEGY WHICH INVOLVES THE GREATER USE OF SIMONSTOWN... CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 242435

ARISES IN PART FROM THE US RAPPROCHMENT WITH CHINA... IF WASHINGTON SOURCES ARE TO BE BELIEVED, PEKING HAS ASKED DR. KISSINGER TO INHIBIT THE DEPLOYMENT THERE (I. E. IN THE INDIAN OCEAN) OF SOVIET SUBMARINES ARMED WITH SS-N-6 MISSILES." THIS ARTICLE CONCLUDES WITH COMMENT THAT PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT AT MINISTRY OF DEFENSE SAID MINISTRY HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED BY DEFENSE SECRETARY "TO DENY CATEGORICALLY THAT THERE IS ANY TRUTH IN THE

ALLEGATION THAT HE AND THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE ROYAL NAVY, MR. JUDD, DISAGREED OVER THE VISIT OF ROYAL NAVY SHIPS TO SOUTH AFRICA."

4. PRESS COMMENTATORS GENERALLY CONCURRED THAT BECAUSE OF FORTHCOMING ELECTION, DISSATISFIED JUNIOR MINISTERS WOULD NOT MAKE PUBLIC ISSUE OF THEIR OPPOSITION VISIT.

5. EMBOFF WAS INFORMED BY HEAD OF CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEPARTMENT AT FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE, PETER FOSTER, ON SEPTEMBER 4, THAT THERE WAS NO TRUTH TO PRESS SPECULATION THAT THERE HAD BEEN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SECRETARY STATE FOR DEFENSE AND PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR NAVY. AS REPORTED LONDON'S 9476, LABOR PARTY POLICY ON NAVAL VISITS TO SOUTH AFRICA IS TO PROHIBIT PURELY CEREMONIAL VISITS, BUT TO CONTINUE OPERATIONAL VISITS. FOSTER COMMENTED THAT MATTER HAD ALREADY BEEN AGREED AT INTERDEPARTMENTAL LEVEL IN JULY BY EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN MINISTER OF STATE AT FOREIGN OFFICE, ROY HATTERSLEY AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENSE, WILLIAM RODGERS, AND THAT NEITHER DEFENSE SECRETARY NOR PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR NAVY HAD BEEN INVOLVED. FOSTER ALSO SAID THAT TERMINOLOGY USED BY GOVERNMENT FOR THE TYPE OF EXERCISE WHICH ROYAL NAVY AND SOUTH AFRICAN NAVY WILL BE ENGAGED IS "JOINT WEAPONS TRAINING" AND NOT "EXERCISE" OR "MANEUVERS" WHICH HAVE DIFFERENT MEANING IN DEFENSE TERMINOLOGY AND WOULD NOT BE AUTHORIZED.

6. COMMENT. BY AUTHORIZING JOINT WEAPONS TRAINING, FIRST TO TAKE PLACE SINCE LABOR ASSUMED POWER IN MARCH, LABOR GOVERNMENT MADE POINT THAT ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS INVOLVING DEFENSE, THEY WILL ACT ON BASIS OF PERCEIVED NATIONAL DEFENSE INTERESTS. DECISION TO DO SO IS ALSO RELEVANT. CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 STATE 242435

VANT TO LABOR GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUING POLICY REVIEW ON SOUTHERN AFRICA WHOSE RESULTS ARE BEING ANNOUNCED THROUGH SERIES OF AD HOC DECISIONS SUCH AS THIS ONE. LABOR PARTY HAS CLEARLY BENEFITED FROM TIMING, AS PARTY LEADERS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SUPPRESS STRONG REACTION FROM WITHIN PARTY, PARTICULARLY FROM SOME JUNIOR MINISTERS, WHO OPPOSE SUCH COLLABORATION WITH SOUTH AFRICAN REGIME, BUT WHO DO NOT WISH TO THREATEN PARTY UNITY IN THIS CRITICAL PRE-ELECTION PERIOD. END COMMENT.
SOHM
UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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